

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NURSING RESEARCH
NATIONAL COALITION OF ETHNIC MINORITY NURSE ASSOCIATIONS
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

**MINORITY HEALTH RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FOR NURSE
INVESTIGATORS**

**Lawton Chiles International House
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD**

June 5-6, 2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

This invitational conference brought together 27 minority nurse investigators and minority nursing association officers to discuss the key issues for minority health nursing research and career development for minority nurses. Although some scientific advances are reducing minority health disparities, many more advances are needed, as well as careful discussion of targeting research efforts on compelling problems. Nurse investigators, and particularly minority nurse investigators, are uniquely positioned to help understand and ameliorate these health disparities.

This conference represented the forging of an historic partnership between the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), the National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations (NCEMNA), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research on Minority Health (ORMH). NCEMNA was incorporated in 1998 and is composed of the elected leadership of its member organizations: the Asian American Pacific Islanders Nurses Association, the National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, the National Black Nurses Association, and the Philippine Nurses Association of America. Each of the five NCEMNA organizations selected five representatives to attend the conference.

CONFERENCE PURPOSES AND FORMAT

The two major purposes of this conference were to:

- (1) Develop recommendations for the nursing research agenda for minority health, and
- (2) Discuss strategies for developing minority nurse researchers.

Welcome remarks were made by Dr. Patricia A. Grady, Director, National Institute of Nursing Research, Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, Acting Director, NIH, Dr. John Ruffin, Associate Director of the Office of Research on Minority Health (ORMH) of NIH; and Dr. Betty Smith Williams, NCEMNA President. Both Drs. Kirschstein and Ruffin noted the NIH commitment to reducing health disparities. NIH's efforts toward this goal have intensified with the preparation of an NIH-wide Strategic Plan on narrowing and eliminating health disparities between minority and majority populations.

Dr. Grady highlighted NINR's focus on minority health issues since its inception in 1986, and identified several important scientific advances that are reducing these disparities. Of the overall

NINR FY1999 budget, 21 percent is allocated to minority health issues, a large percentage of which is devoted to studying and reducing health disparities. The recently developed NINR Strategic Plan on Reducing Health Disparities describes current and future plans for initiatives in this area. (http://www.nih.gov/ninr/a_mission.html)

Dr. Williams applauded the efforts of NINR and its attention to minority health issues. She indicated that this historic workshop represented a true partnership between racial/ethnic nursing organizations and nursing research. Dr. Williams also noted that the NCEMNA and its member organizations are well positioned in racial/ethnic communities and nursing communities to join in leading this important initiative.

Representatives from each of the five NCEMNA member organizations presented a paper reflecting historic and background information about their ethnic group, a summary of the health status of their ethnic group, and specific areas or topics appropriate for research, with an emphasis on future minority health nursing research. * Following discussion of these papers, small group sessions were held to identify important areas of nursing research opportunity across ethnic groups in the categories of health promotion, illness management, and populations across the lifespan.

The second day of the conference was focused on developing minority nurse researchers. It began with an overview of NINR activities in research training for minority investigators. Minority investigators who represented various stages of career development then discussed in a panel format their individual research training experiences, including funding opportunities, mentorship, and factors that facilitated their careers. A second panel described a collaborative model for career development of minority investigators that involved a school of nursing at a research-intensive majority institution (University of Pennsylvania) and an HBCU (Hampton University). Small groups deliberated to identify specific strategies and solutions for research career development from the perspective of the individual, the educational institution, and organizations.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT MINORITY HEALTH RESEARCH IN NURSING

Conference participants made the following general recommendations to frame future minority health nursing research:

- **Diversity.** Diversity includes the notion that there are important differences between minority groups, and also within group differences. Differences between the subgroups of a minority category may not be readily apparent due to aggregated data. Diversity influences the values, beliefs, and meaning of health and illness. The meaning of health and illness for minority subgroups must be understood to achieve reduction in health disparities. Diversity requires culturally-appropriate models, culturally- and linguistically-appropriate instruments, and culturally-specific interventions.
- **Appropriate research methods.** A study that is designed *for* an ethnic minority population should be designed *with* them. The research design and methodology selected for the study should reflect the state-of-the-science, and be driven by the research question(s). Both qualitative and quantitative research may be appropriate. Descriptive work is needed to generate knowledge on selected minority health topics such as ethnic health status and illness values and beliefs.

- **Community-based research.** Some health disparity issues should be dealt with at the community level. For example, communities are the key to effective health promotion and disease prevention. Community-based organizations should be essential parts of consortia developed by grantees.
- **Information dissemination.** Nursing research results must be disseminated widely to scientific, clinical, and lay audiences. NINR currently collects information about published research in peer-reviewed journals, but wider dissemination is needed, especially about research findings that can be applied in the community and in other clinical care settings. In addition, the five NCEMNA member organizations will disseminate their state-of-the-science summaries widely, in order to educate other nurses and the public about these issues. Specific outreach methods will be designed to better reach minority nursing groups, e.g., tribal colleges. For example, individuals attending this conference should be added to NINR's distribution list for information regarding minority health research and research training opportunities.

SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR NURSING RESEARCH RELATED TO MINORITY HEALTH

With the overall goal of improving the health status of minority populations and reducing health disparities, conference participants identified a number of research opportunities in the following types of research:

- Basic research - e.g., genetic biomarkers
- Epidemiological studies - e.g., subgroup demographic data and databases on health status
- Clinical studies (descriptive or interventional) - e.g., health-seeking behaviors; individual responses to illness; intervention studies, especially for the top 10 causes of death for each ethnic group; behavior change; the use of traditional health modalities; community-based and community-involved studies; self-care management; and translating research into practice
- Health services research – e.g., access to care and utilization of health care services

Opportunities for nursing research related to minority health were identified in the following categories:

- **Health Promotion.** Health promotion is viewed as extending across the lifespan and encompassing the health-illness continuum. It is a multidimensional concept involving bio-psycho-social-spiritual components. Nursing health promotion research is needed in the following areas:
 - Research to determine health promotion activities in various ethnic groups.
 - Development of culturally- and linguistically-appropriate instruments to determine health status.
 - Development of culturally-appropriate strategies for health promotion and disease prevention.
 - Multisite studies would be beneficial, especially for descriptive studies.
- **Illness Management.** Hypertension, diabetes, and HIV were identified as the clinical problems of most interest. The following minority population studies are needed:
 - Access to and use of health care services.
 - Predictors of adherence to medical regimens and lifestyle modifications.
 - Self-care management for various ethnic groups.
 - Determinants of behavior change for various ethnic groups.

- Culturally-tailored health care interventions, specifically interventions that make a difference in incidence, prevalence, and management of diabetes.
- The effects of religiosity/spirituality on health, health-seeking behavior, and illness management.
- The integration of mental health with illness management.
- Common and distinctive factors that prevent morbidity and mortality of chronic illnesses.
- **Across the Lifespan:** Research with minority populations must account for issues of social justice and parity. Studies that focus on lifespan issues should focus on positive outcomes such as resilience, identify cultural strengths, pinpoint vulnerable points across the lifespan, and examine health in the context of family and community. Specific research needs include:
 - Infants – improving prenatal care and perinatal outcomes
 - Children – health concerns for children with special needs, school-based and community-based nursing interventions, preventing violent behaviors, and prevention/reduction of risk factors for chronic illnesses and sexually transmitted diseases
 - Adults - research on minority males across the lifespan, and preventive interventions for chronic illnesses
 - Elderly - early detection and prevention of social isolation and depression, effectiveness of home health services, nutritional risks, end-of-life issues.

A number of research issues were identified that were not under the funding purview of NINR. However, it was agreed that NINR, ORMH, and NCEMNA could work together to leverage funding within NIH, and disseminate the results of this workshop to other federal agencies as well as other funding sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF MINORITY NURSE INVESTIGATORS

Conference participants made the following recommendations to enhance the career trajectories of minority nurse investigators:

- **Grantsmanship training.** Grantsmanship training should be more readily available. Special programs, such as the NINR Summer Institute “Research Training: Developing Nurse Scientists,” are valuable for career development.
- **Research training.** NINR evaluation of its pre- and post-doctoral research training programs can determine factors associated with successful research careers. NINR should continue to provide special career development opportunities for minority nurse investigators, and should consider developing short-term fellowship programs for additional training. A centralized database listing Federal and non-Federal research training opportunities is needed.
- **Funding.** NIH should increase the availability of grants of all kinds, including startup funding, for minority researchers. NIH should consider developing a special funding mechanism for enlisting community leaders as research collaborators to enhance capacity building, and should develop a minority R01 as a mechanism for minority scientists. NIH should develop a mechanism to track submission and funding of minority investigators.
- **Mentoring.** Mentoring is key to the capacity building of minority nurse researchers. A minority nurse researcher mentors network should be established. NINR, NCEMNA, and the ORMH

should work together to establish a database of researchers interested in working as mentors. Schools of nursing should commit to building research capacity among minority nurse faculty, and should provide mentorship opportunities for these faculty. Schools should also provide support resources and an environment that maximizes the potential for nurse scientists to succeed.

- **Peer review.** NINR and NCEMNA should identify talented researchers to act as reviewers for NIH study sections. These reviewers could also serve as role models for other nursing professionals and would champion nursing research and minority group issues. Peer reviewers should incorporate a criterion to address the participation of minority investigators. In addition, minority nurse investigators should be involved at all levels of decision-making for funding decisions.

CONCLUSION

Participants agreed that the conference purposes were achieved, and that implementation is the next step. Clear support for reducing minority health disparities and increasing the numbers of minority nurse researchers was offered from the Acting Director of NIH, Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, as well as from the Directors of ORMH and NINR. NCEMNA's expertise will be helpful in facilitating the involvement of minority communities and in implementing recommendations from the conference. Continued collaboration from all parties is required to achieve the long-term goals discussed at this conference, including future meetings and activities between NINR and NCEMNA.

ATTACHMENTS (included in web version)

1. Agenda
2. Participant list

* Citations for the 5 published background papers will be added when available.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This workshop was co-sponsored by the NINR, ORMH, and NCEMNA. The NINR website is www.nih.gov/ninr/ The ORMH website is www.od.nih.gov/ORMH/